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ABSTRACT

A study of the use of and attitudes about language laboratories focused on teacher perceptions of their speed, accuracy, and motivational capability and on the extent to which these characteristics are exploited in classroom use by teachers and students. Observers in four British schools of English rated details of language laboratory use in a total of 56 sessions. The laboratory sessions were rated for their relationship to the criteria job satisfaction, speed, and accuracy, characteristics assumed to be advantageous in the language laboratory. It was found that only 13 of the 56 sessions fully exploited the facilities and that those sessions had these common features: frequency of use (once a day or more often), teachers skilled in laboratory use, and well-trained and responsible students with machines fully under their control. It is suggested that the language laboratory's use and usefulness are limited only by the imagination, training, and willingness of the teacher. (MSE)

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EVALUATING THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY IN PRACTICE

Robert Vanderplank (Helsinki University)

1 A model for language laboratory evaluation

1.1 Background

Some time ago I investigated the proposition that the language laboratory (henceforth, LL) was largely a wasted resource. I wanted to find out why a valuable educational tool, written about for over 25 years, often at great length, and in use all over the world, was so poorly regarded by many and rarely seemed to come up to expectations when put to the test. This work was greeted well by some language schools in Britain, but on the whole it was received with an embarrassed silence. I had hoped to raise standards of LL use by attempting to raise user-consciousness through the evaluation techniques which will be described below.

The literature on LL evaluation is rather depressing. Most studies, for example, the Pennsylvania Project (Smith, 1970), the 'communicative competence' study of Savignon (1972), and the York Study of Green and his associates (Green, 1975) come out against the LL. A notable early exception is the study of Sarah Lorge (1964), but on the whole that study remains an exception. Indeed, the last large-scale study in Britain, the York Study mentioned above, was particularly damning: that current uses of the LL make it largely a waste of money.

On the other side, there is a great deal of literature on how to select a LL, how to manage it, how best to exploit it, its advantages, and so on. Then there is a third branch which deals with reactions of teachers: questionnaires, attitude surveys, such as those by Anderson (1977) in Sweden, and by Holec (1971) in Belgium.

When, early on in my research, I complained about the basic unfairness of LL comparative studies, since they were loaded against the LL from the outset by their very design, I was told that there was no other way. As a convinced LL man who has worked in LL-orientated environments and is conscious of the benefits it may bring, I could not accept the findings of many studies in any way other than trivial. If you reduce your expensive tool to an almost insignificant role, in order to compare its performance with some thing else, waste much of its potential and fail to train personnel and make them aware of its potential, then it seems to me that you are not holding a fair evaluation.

1.2 How the model is made up

I wanted to find a means of evaluating the LL on its own terms in practice. That is, how this sophisticated, educational tool, with its own rationale and principles of good use, and with sound pedagogical reasons to justify its purchase, was actually used by teachers and learners (leaving aside purely administrative reasons for its use). I

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took as my starting point the three basic reasons for the purchase of any new tool: that it does the job FASTER, BETTER, or gives more USER SATISFACTION than any other comparable piece of equipment or means of doing the job. This would mean, in teaching terms, the tape recorder, a simple form of LL, such as an audio-active LL, or no educational aids.

How are we to translate these criteria into LL terms? Well, writers on LL use often talk about the advantages of using the LL. I looked at the literature and found some 13 given, but there are seven which all writers agree on:

1. Each learner can answer all the questions and work all the time.
2. Each learner is responsible for his own performance.
3. Each learner can listen critically to his own voice.
4. Each learner can work at his own pace.
5. The teacher can deal with each learner's problems individually.
6. The LL can provide a variety of programmes and activities.
7. Learners are not afraid to speak in the privacy of the LL.

How can we link the criteria of FASTER, BETTER, and JOB SATISFACTION with the proposed or assumed advantages given in the literature. I would suggest the following:

WORK STUDY CRITERIA

ASSUMED ADVANTAGES

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Quickness in performing tasks
(cutting time/increasing
practice time per student) | own pace, answer all
questions |
| 2. Accuracy in performing tasks
(cutting waste/improving
class performance) | listen critically, teacher
can help individually |
| 3. Job Satisfaction
(using the intelligence of
the user as a contributing
factor to the above two criteria/
increasing interest and motivation) | responsibility, privacy,
variety |

You may well suggest that in reality the links are not quite as neat and clear-cut as I have made them. I would agree entirely, and this overlapping will be accommodated in another part of the model which will be described below.

What happens in practice? Of course, the advantages do not come automatically, although LL salesman might suggest that they do. Meeting the criteria and gaining the advantages depend on whether specific facilities built into the LL are used and also on how they are used. In other words, the advantages are only realized in practice by the use of the facilities available and by the fulfilment of specific conditions regarding the use of the facilities. Let us take, for example, assumed advantage number 3. Each learner can listen critically to his own voice. In strictly practical terms, for this assumed advantage to be obtained, not only must the LL have a record/playback facility and dual-track tape recorder, but the learner must also be able to manipulate controls, drills and exercises with ease, independent

of the teacher, and have both time and the ability to assess what has been recorded and then correct errors. Moreover, the learner must be aware that the responsibility for the performance is his alone (assumed advantage number 2.).

In more general terms, each assumed advantage can be said to be based on the presence and use of facilities (e.g. cue/rewind, monitor/intercom.) or functions (learner can recap/correct, teacher can listen to learner performance/correct learner), and also on the fulfilment of both pedagogical and technical conditions. The facilities and functions of a normal AAC LL are well-known and I shall not go through them here. As far as pedagogical and technical conditions are concerned, my model includes some thirty in all, some of which are shown below:

Pedagogical conditions of use

LL work should be purpose-designed
Teacher should be trained in exploitation of LL
Objectives of any LL session should be explicit
Amount of LL work should permit learners to work systematically through at own pace
Material should be pre-recorded if administratively possible
Learners must be trained to avoid over- and under-learning
Learners must be trained not to rely on teacher intervention
Students must be trained in use of LL controls
Material used must be adequate and appropriate for the task

Technical conditions of use

Equipment used should be adequate for the task in terms of noise, reliability, clarity
All facilities should be functioning
Material used should be technically adequate e.g. quality of recording

I think it should be clear by this point that some facilities and functions and their underlying conditions of use can be linked to almost all assumed advantages, while others are more specific. For example, those concerned with self-assessment and correction, and possibly with over- and under-learning can be linked directly with assumed advantage number 3. Each learner can listen critically to his own voice. If we take this point a stage further, we can say that some facilities/functions and conditions have greater bearing on one of the three criteria for LL use: SPEED (S), ACCURACY (A) and JOB SATISFACTION (J), than on the other two. That is, you can weight the use of a facility or an underlying condition with S, A, or J, or with any combination of them. The way this works is shown below in the Operational Model for the analysis and evaluation of LL use.

Let me summarise briefly what I have said so far. My model is built on :

1. utilization of facilities and functions, and,
2. fulfillment of conditions underlying their use.

The absence and presence of these conditions and the degree to which any facility or function is exploited act as deciding factors in whether an assumed advantage is obtained in practice in any LL session.

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OPERATIONAL MODEL FOR ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF LL USE

CRITERION	ADVANTAGE	USE OF FACILITY/FUNCTION OR CONDITION OF USE	PRACTICE WEIGHTING
SPEED	1. ANSWER ALL Q'S & WORK ALL TIME	LL WORK PURPOSE-DESIGNED START-UP TIME SHORT LEARNERS PARTICIPATE IN SESSION LEARNERS' INTEREST IN SESSION TEACHERS 'HAPPY' USE OF LL TEACHERS LIKE USING LL TEACHERS EXPERIENCED LL WORK COORDINATED MATERIAL INDEXED	S/A S S S/A/J J S/A J S
JOB SATISFACTION	2. RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE PERFORMANCE	ALL LEARNERS CLEAR ABOUT OBJECTIVES ALL L. 'HAPPY' MANIPULATING DRILLS FREQUENT USE OF 'T' CALL DISCRIMINATING USE OF 'T' CALL PEDAGOGICAL MONITOR INSTRUCTIONAL MONITOR ANALYSIS/DIAGNOSIS OF PROB. ERRORS ANAL/DIAG. OF STRUCTURAL ERRORS	S/A/J S/A/J J S/A A/J S/J S/A/J S/A/J
ACCURACY	3. LISTEN CRITICALLY TO ONE VOICE	ALL LEARNERS ABLE TO CRITICIZE ALL CAPABLE OF SELF-CRITICISM LEARNERS TEND TO UNDER-LEARN LEARNERS TEND TO OVER-LEARN	A/J A A S
CRITERION	ADVANTAGE	USE OF FACILITY/FUNCTION OR CONDITION OF USE	PRACTICE WEIGHTING
SPEED	4. WORK AT OWN PACE	ALL LEARNERS 'HAPPY' MECHANICALLY ALL PRE-RECORDED LEARNERS CONTROL DURING SESSION LEARNERS ABLE TO VARY PACE LEARNERS 'HAPPY' WITH PRE-SET PACE VARIETY OF PACE	S/J S/J J S/J J J
ACCURACY	5. TEACHER CAN DEAL WITH INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS	TEACHER MONITORS LEARNERS IN SESSION INDIVIDUAL/GENERAL MONITOR	A/J S/J
JOB SATISFACTION	6. VARIETY OF PROG. & ACTIVITIES	VARIETY OF MATERIALS VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES LL FUNCTIONS EXPLOITED RECORDED MATERIALS INTEGRATED	J J J S/J
JOB SATISFACTION	7. VARIETY OF BOOTH	ACOUSTICS/NOISE	J

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In turn, the absence or presence of the different advantages then indicates whether the LL session can be said to have been held for reasons of SPEED, ACCURACY, or JOB SATISFACTION, none of these, or any combination of them.

2 The model in practice

2.1 Observation grids

The model was adapted to a set of observation grids, four in all. These are shown overleaf. The most important grids for assessing individual LL sessions were Grid 2. Teacher use of LL and Grid 3. Student use of LL.

As can be seen from grids 2 and 3, absence or presence of conditions and use of facilities and functions was not enough. I was also interested in the degree to which equipment was used and functions were carried out. Each scale, therefore, had a set of operational definitions. Some examples of the definitions used are given after the grids. '0' - zero - was always taken to mean 'inapplicable in this session'.

It may all seem rather 'ad hoc' to the informed reader. I should say at this point that I attempted to gain validity for the grids and definitions (which were, in fact, derived entirely from the literature and findings of research on LL use) by distributing questionnaires on LL use to all teachers in the first school studied. The results of these questionnaires supported very strongly the model, the content of the grids and the definitions. It could be claimed, therefore, that teachers were being assessed by the very criteria that they themselves accepted or supported.

2.2 The observations

There were seven observers in four schools of English (including the author). The schools were the School of English Studies, Folkestone, Colchester and Bedford English Study Centres, and the Davies School, Cambridge. Unfortunately, the teacher at the Davies School who was to carry out the observations proved to have neither the knowledge or the experience to carry out the task adequately. It should be clear by this stage that operating this model with any degree of accuracy and reliability does require a sound knowledge and understanding of LL's and considerable experience with them. Thus, even a disappointing observer was, for the purposes of the trial of the model, useful in some respects.

Altogether 56 LL sessions were observed. In each session the observer completed the marking of the grids as the session progressed. Some class information regarding materials, students and the teacher was, of course, known in advance, so grids 2 and 3 could receive most attention. By the end of each session, an observer had gathered a lot of quantitative data on the use of facilities and functions and on the extent to which conditions had been fulfilled. These data could then be grouped according to their bearing on each assumed advantage, using the weighting given to each in terms of S, A and J.

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GRID 1: CLASS DESCRIPTION of class with at on ..

Learning: Content of course:
Objectives:
Time:
Prerequisite:
Learning environment:
Material:
Progressive rights:
Students: Basic-cultural:
Enrollment:
Spokane: 1. for learning:
2. for language learning:
Motivation:
Level of IL:
Teacher: Attitude to students:
Attitude to method:
Attitude to IL:
Length of experience with IL:
Cultural awareness:
Linguistic and psycholinguistic knowledge:
Class: Number of students:
Average age: mm. age: min. age:
Class level:
L 1's
Use of IL before:
Teacher native speaker/non-native speaker
Teacher's age:

GRID 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASS with at on

1. IL MATERIAL: circle appropriate alternatives

Integrated/supplementary
class note/library note
supplement/initial
tape only/audi-tape/realia/printed matter
negative/impolative

2. TEACHER'S USE OF IL DURING SESSION: Circle appropriate number using definition sheet.

2. "happy" use of IL 5 4 3 2 1 0
2. like using IL 5 4 3 2 1 0
2. experienced in IL use 5 4 3 2 1 0
Objectives of session explicit 5 4 3 2 1 0
Start-up time short 5 4 3 2 1 0
Material induced 5 4 3 2 1 0
IL work co-ordinated with class work 5 4 3 2 1 0
IL work purpose-designed 5 4 3 2 1 0
IL functions exploited 5 4 3 2 1 0
All pre-arranged 5 4 3 2 1 0
Variety of materials 5 4 3 2 1 0
Variety of activities 5 4 3 2 1 0
Variety of pace 5 4 3 2 1 0
Choice of materials 5 4 3 2 1 0
Choice of pace 5 4 3 2 1 0
2. control of process 5 4 3 2 1 0
Sound materials integrated with other materials in IL 5 4 3 2 1 0
teacher monitors students/time 5 4 3 2 1 0
Pedagogical monitoring/time 5 4 3 2 1 0
Instructional monitoring/time 5 4 3 2 1 0
Monitoring from individual to general 5 4 3 2 1 0
Teacher notes notes of student errors 5 4 3 2 1 0
Analysis and diagnosis of student pronunciation errors 5 4 3 2 1 0
Analysis and diagnosis of student structural errors 5 4 3 2 1 0
Teacher feed-in of supplementary materials 5 4 3 2 1 0

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UNIT 3: COMPREHENSION OF CLASS with at on

STUDENT USE OF LL READING SECTION: Circle appropriate number using definition sheet.

All students clear as to pedagogical function of LL	5 4 3 2 1 0
All S. "happy" unconditionally	5 4 3 2 1 0
All S. "happy" conditionally	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. tend to "withdraw"	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. tend to "withdraw"	5 4 3 2 1 0
All S. clear as to objectives of session	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. able to vary pace	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. "happy" with pre-set pace	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. able to self-correct/withdraw	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. capable of self-correcting/withdrawing	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. frequent use of T. call	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. discriminating in use of T. call	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. control TSPs/time	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. know when to stop	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. participating/time	5 4 3 2 1 0
S. individualized learning/pace	5 4 3 2 1 0

STUDENT USE OF LL READING

STUDENT READING: Circle appropriate number for each:

LL system	yes/no
classroom	yes/no
teacher	yes/no

T. has full physical control: yes/no

T. has full physical control: yes/no

STUDENT READING: High-speed transfer/translation S. & T. record/record
classroom presentation master/loop-repeater/multi-input/
mini-programmer/low speed/large scale for audio/
group control/"S" record indicator/writing surfaces/
group & individual facilities /

FUNCTIONS USED IN LL SECTION:

LL format: Wall facing/rows with sightlines/rows without sightlines
noise: yes/no attention: good/OK/poor chart: yes/no
Availability of other equipment: easy/difficult

UNIT 4: COMPREHENSION OF CLASS

UNIT 4: COMPREHENSION OF CLASS with at on

STUDENT USE OF LL READING: Circle appropriate choice(s).

COMMENTS

Variety of material available at this level: yes/no
Prepared for LL use/prepared for teacher/multi-purpose
Published material/in-house material/scripts/teaching notes

Production factors:	clarity	good/adequate/poor
	intonation	good/adequate/poor
	pace	good/adequate/poor
	stress	good/adequate/poor
	volume	good/adequate/poor
	intensity	good/adequate/poor

STUDENT MATERIALS: 1. exercises/drills

Compatible with other materials	yes/no/unclear
Workbooks/instructions	yes/no/unclear
Dr. content controlled/graded	yes/no/unclear
Changes from segment to segment controlled/graded	yes/no/unclear
Sufficient number of Dr. patterns before change of pattern	yes/no/unclear
Single correct response	yes/no/unclear
Vocabulary selected/graded	yes/no/unclear
Drills well-related to material accompanying	yes/no/unclear
Variety of drill type	yes/no/unclear

2. Disappears for initiation/imitation/role-playing

Authentic cultural setting	yes/no/unclear
General subject matter	yes/no/unclear
Model phrases for communication	yes/no/unclear
Segments for repetition of "memorable" length	yes/no/unclear
Background notes appropriate	yes/no/unclear

3. Other materials used

In material used at other levels/other situations	yes/no/unclear
In material present for full comprehension	yes/no/unclear
In content/area/level	yes/no/unclear

STUDENT READING: Circle appropriate number on each scale using definition sheet.

discrete	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	integrated	_____
indivisible	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	flexible	_____
reactive	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	interactive	_____
linear-systematic	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	indirect-selective	_____
T. controlled	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	S. controlled	_____
imitative	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	creative	_____
phonetic	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	semantic	_____
functional	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	functional	_____
diversified/advanced	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	authentic	_____
skill-based	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	concept-based	_____
habit-based	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	memory-based	_____

Will materials used help meeting teaching objectives in terms of
drills, games, stories? yes/no/unclear

THROUGH 'HAPPY' USE OF LL:

- 5 - TRACKER MAY BE LIKE USING LL OR MAY BE EXPERIENCED IN ITS USE BUT DEMONSTRATES A MANIPULATIVE AND MECHANICAL SKILL WITH CONTROLS AND FUNCTIONS WHICH INDICATE AN UNDERSTANDING NOT ONLY OF THE MECHANICAL OPERATION OF THE EQUIPMENT BUT ALSO OF ITS INHERENT METHODOLOGICAL ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS.

- 3/4 - NEUTRAL PERFORMANCE, I.E. NO PARTICULAR SYMPATHY BUT APPARENTLY AWARE OF THE NATURE OF THE EQUIPMENT AND APPROPRIATE MANNER OF EXPLOITING IT.

- 1/2 - TRACKER MAY LIKE USING THE LL AND MAY EVEN BE EXPERIENCED IN ITS USE, BUT DEMONSTRATES AN ABSENCE OF MANIPULATIVE AND MECHANICAL SYMPATHY WITH CONTROLS AND FUNCTIONS WHICH INDICATES A LACK OF AWARENESS BUT ONLY OF THE NATURE OF THE EQUIPMENT, BUT ALSO OF ITS INHERENT METHODOLOGICAL ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS.

ALL LEARNERS 'HAPPY' MANIPULATIVELY:

- 5 - LEARNERS ABLE TO PERFORM THE STANDARD VARIETY OF DRILLS AND EXERCISES, E.G. REPETITIONS, TRANSFORMATION, SUBSTITUTION, ETC., AND TO MOVE FROM ACTIVITY TO ACTIVITY WITH MINIMUM LOSS OF CONCENTRATION.
- 3 - SOME LEARNERS ARE NOT SO 'HAPPY' BUT ARE ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM PRACTICE.
- 1 - LEARNERS DEFINITELY 'UNHAPPY' UNABLE AS TO HOW TO PERFORM DRILLS (C.F. TRACKER INSTRUCTURAL MONITORING/TIME)

INSTRUCTURAL MONITORING/TIME:

- 5 - 100% OF MONITORING TIME
- 4 - 75%
- 3 - 50%
- 2 - 25%
- 1 - 0%

EXPERIENCETRACKER EXPERIENCED TO LL USE:

PROGRAMME	DURATION	LENGTH OF TIME
PER WEEK	PRACTICE	MONTHS
	OF WEEK	

- 5 - 100% VERY EXPERIENCED
- 4 - 80% MODERATELY EXPERIENCED
- 3 - 60% ADEQUATE EXPERIENCE
- 2 - 40% LIMITED EXPERIENCE
- 1 - 20% INADEQUATE/INEXPERIENCED

LEARNERS TEND TO OVER-LEARN

- 5 - OVER 90% OF LEARNERS HAVE TENDENCY TO OVER THROUGH EXERCISE AND DRILLS WITHOUT SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE AND WITH INSUFFICIENT USE OF SOUND AND REPLAY FACILITIES
- 3 - SOME LEARNERS, BUT UNDER 50%, OVER-LEARN AT SOME POINTS IN THE SESSION
- 1 - FEW, IF ANY, LEARNERS TEND TO OVER-LEARN AT ANY TIME

LEARNERS ABLE TO VARY PACE

- 5 - LEARNERS HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OF PACE OF LEARNING AND PRACTISING THROUGHOUT SESSION
- 3 - LEARNERS HAVE CONTROL FOR OVER 50% OF SESSION E.G. AFTER TRANSFER OF PROGRAMME IS LOCK-STEP
- 1 - LEARNERS WORK IN LOCK-STEP THROUGHOUT SESSION

As was said earlier, some conditions or use of facilities/functions have a bearing on all three criteria and so were given equal S, A and J weighting, but at the same time were felt to be more relevant to a single assumed advantage and consequently were attached to that advantage. Since assumed advantages were also given S, A or J criterion, obtaining an assumed advantage establishes whether the respective criterion is being fulfilled, and thus, a qualitative assessment in terms of Speed, Accuracy or Job Satisfaction (i.e. their pedagogical equivalents) is then possible.

The results for eleven out of the fifty-six sessions are shown below (a representative sample). Two of these sessions, 19 and 39, are also given the analysis described above. The analysis shows that the main criterion for holding session 19 appears to have been Job Satisfaction. Of course, in pedagogical terms, without the other criteria, it could well be interpreted as simply giving the learners a change of scene and activity, with no clear pedagogical objectives. In session 39, on the other hand, the Job Satisfaction criterion is linked to the Accuracy criterion, through an emphasis on both accuracy and self-responsibility.

The full results in terms of the three criteria were as follows:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Number of sessions</u>
Job Satisfaction/Speed/Accuracy	13
Job Satisfaction/Speed	13
Job Satisfaction/Accuracy	7
Job Satisfaction only	13
Speed/Accuracy	1
Accuracy only	0
Speed only	5
None	3
Insufficient data	1

Only thirteen out of fifty-six can be said to have exploited the facilities of the LL fully according to the criteria, and to have gained the advantages of LL use. So, just as the York Study found, the LL really is under-exploited and in these terms is a wasted resource for many. The reasons for the poor showing of so many sessions have been discussed elsewhere (Vanderplank, 1961), but limitations of space means that I can only briefly summarise what the good sessions had in common and what the limiting factors in LL use appear to be from this study.

3 Common features of fully-exploited sessions

The thirteen fully-exploited sessions had the following common features:

- frequency of use (once a day or more)
- teachers skilled in LL use
- students well-trained and responsible (all machines fully under their control).

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SESSION 19

- ADVANTAGE 1.** J and S weightings predominate. Advantage obtained.
- ADVANTAGE 2.** Mixed weightings. The advantage is not fully obtained as the teacher spent ~~too~~ so much time telling some learners what to do.
- ADVANTAGE 3.** Many of the class are unable to take advantage of the compare facility.
- ADVANTAGE 4.** The advantage gained by pre-recording is largely cancelled by a monotonous pace of work throughout the session, with only a short song to break it at the end. High motivation shown by high 'interest' score.
- ADVANTAGE 5.** C.f. Advantage 2. Most communication with students is instructional.
- ADVANTAGE 6.** Very limited. Advantage not exploited.
- ADVANTAGE 7.** Obtained.
- CONCLUSIONS:** While Advantages 1, 5, and 7 are exploited, those concerned with self-criticism (3), self-responsibility (6) and variety (4) are not. There is a clear predominance of J/S Satisfaction weightings, which, without other weightings and consequent advantages could be interpreted as simply giving the learners a change of scene and activity with no clear pedagogical objectives.

SESSION 20

- ADVANTAGE 1.** Fully exploited. All weightings.
- ADVANTAGE 2.** Fully exploited. All weightings.
- ADVANTAGE 3.** Adequately exploited. 'A' weightings predominate.
- ADVANTAGE 4.** Fully exploited. Forty minute session. High interest and participation values, although single pace throughout on tape.
- ADVANTAGE 5.** Fully exploited. C.f. ADVANTAGE 2. Pedagogical communication encouraging self-criticism and self-responsibility.
- ADVANTAGE 6.** Not exploited.
- ADVANTAGE 7.** Adequate. Cassette hiss.
- CONCLUSIONS:** All Advantages except Number 6 (Variety) exploited. While all weightings are present, emphasis is on accuracy and self-responsibility (i.e. J/S Satisfaction) in this session.

Assumed advantages

Each student can answer all
q's and work all the time

Each S. responsible for
own performance

S. can listen critically
to own voice

S. can work at own pace

T. can deal with individual
students
LL can provide variety of
programmes & activities

S. can work in privacy of booth

Grid conditions

LL work coordinated
T 'happy' use of LL
T likes using LL
T experience
Mot. induced
Start up time short
S interest/time
S participation/time
LL work purpose-designed

All S. happy manip.
All S. clear objectives
Frequent T-call
Discrim. T-call
Pedagogical monitor
Anal/Diag. pron. errors
Anal/Diag. str. errors
Instructional monitor

All S. able crit.
All S. capable crit.
S. tend underlearn
S. tend overlearn

All S. 'happy' teach.
All pre-recorded
S. control/time
S. able to vary pace
S. 'happy' pre-set pace
Variety pace

T. monitor S./time
Individ-general monitor
Rec. sets. integrated
Variety of materials
Variety of activities
LL functions exploited
Acoustics/noise

S/A/J

S/A/J
/J

S/A
S/
S/
/J
/J
S/A

S/A/J
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4 Final comments

I have argued that instead of just comparing the LL with other ways of teaching or learning languages, we need to evaluate how the LL itself is used. I have argued that we can see the rationale behind the LL in terms of three criteria, that it is faster, better, or gives more job satisfaction, and of seven advantages to be gained, potentially, in using the LL.

I would suggest that if the LL is not exploited in such a way as to fulfil the first two criteria, then the user must demonstrate how the LL is suited to the use being made of it in both technological terms and pedagogical terms. The models and grids which I have presented and described do have the potential to raise user-consciousness (especially as teacher and student checklists) through demonstrating clearly where improvements can be made. As I found in my studies, it is possible to use the LL fully and well in a very wide variety of ways - not just structural drills, listening exercises, or pronunciation work. In fact, I would say that its uses and usefulness are limited by only two factors: the skills and imagination of the teacher, and the degree of training, preparation and responsibility which the teacher can and is willing to give the learners.

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